

**PRESS RELEASE**

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**Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union on Philippines**

The European Union regrets the violence and loss of life that have occurred during recent events in Manila. The European Union calls for the Constitution of the Philippines, human rights and the rule of law to be upheld by all political forces in the country. With a view to the forthcoming elections on 14 May, the Union urges all concerned to exercise restraint and to co-operate in order to secure a peaceful and fair electoral process. The European Union also reaffirms its readiness to co-operate with the new administration in addressing the priorities it has set for the development of the Philippines.

The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia, the associated countries Cyprus, Malta and Turkey, and the EFTA countries Iceland and Norway, members of the European Economic Area align themselves with this declaration.